

Fwd: Newark Human Rights Comm.

N. J. DOCUMENTS
NEWARK LIBRARY

MAYOR'S COMMISSION
ON
GROUP RELATIONS
ANNUAL REPORT

1954

LEO P. CARLIN, MAYOR

NEWARK, N. J.

FORWARD

This Second Annual Report of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations is a brief summary of our continuing efforts to resolve the misunderstandings and relieve the tensions which result from prejudice and discrimination.

It is our attempt to give further meaning to the concepts of group relations, human rights and brotherhood. It is a partial expression of our goal: to shorten the gap between our future hopes and our present realizations. The 1954 Supreme Court Decision to de-segregate the Nation's schools signified the high-water mark in the ever widening stream of progress toward a more unified country. What results from that unanimous vote of the highest court in our land should help immeasurably to complete the unfinished business of American Democracy.

It should be noted that the Commission was disbanded on July 1, 1954. All educational, consultative and survey activities which occurred from that time to the end of the year were carried on by the staff of the Commission.

Daniel S. Anthony,
Executive Director

Ira A. Gissen,
Assistant Director

(The Commission was officially reactivated by Mayor Leo P. Carlin on March 1, 1955.)

FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES WEEK

In keeping with the policy established during the first year of the Commission's operation, Newark gave pungent meaning to its annual BROTHERHOOD WEEK by highlighting FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES.

Unless all people know and understand the Anti-Discrimination Law of this state, some individuals will suffer. For that reason, the Commission uses every available means to publicize and dramatize the Law during this memorial week of Washington's birthday.

The distribution of thousands of pamphlets in the Concourse of the Public Service Building and the Rotunda of City Hall was done by volunteer workers from thirty Newark organizations. Five of the leading department stores gave prominent placement to window displays. Boy Scouts got in on the celebration by distributing posters to 100 smaller neighborhood stores. The daily and weekly newspapers cooperated with editorials and feature stories. Programs in clubs and organizations were given over to a discussion of "Fair Employment Practices - Making Brotherhood Count".

ELEANOR ROOSEVELT SPEAKS

One of the major functions of the Commission is to coordinate the Human Relations activities of other community groups. The Eleanor Roosevelt Dinner was this year's prime example of this kind of joint educational event.

With the generous aid of the Newark Chapter of the American Association for the United Nations, the Commission involved sixty of Newark's largest organizations in the planning and execution of this Dinner and Town Meeting.

Although the Elizabethan Room of the Essex House was chosen the place of meeting, and although every other available space in the hotel was jammed with chairs to accommodate the overflow crowd, more than five hundred persons were turned away.

This was truly the "United Peoples of Newark" assembling to do honor to a great woman and to hear her speak words of wisdom on "Human Relations and the United Nations".

FAITH IN FREEDOM

On July 4th, Mayor Leo P. Carlin proclaimed "Freedom Month" as a period of re-dedication to the Fundamentals of the Declaration of Independence, The Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He called upon every American Citizen "To use and implement the Freedoms which are our heritage...to defend and pass on to succeeding generations the faith of our Founding Fathers".

The Leaders of all Newark religious, civic and labor organizations drew up the "Reaffirmation of Faith" which became the theme for the observance in this community. The Mayor's Commission cooperated in the planning of this observance and coordinated the work of the other Group Relations agencies.

The Newark Evening News, in its editorial comment on this event said in part, "even in the United States, despite the Constitution, despite tradition, liberty can be eroded. Its preservation depends on public conviction and on its support for the principles of freedom, even when that means the tolerance of unpopular points of view. Liberty includes the right to be wrong. By reaffirming their own faith, the Newark Leaders have set an example that ought to have wide and wholesome influence."

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

David M. Litwin, Chairman of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, testified before the United States Senate, Subcommittee on Civil Rights, on March 3, 1954. He was invited to describe the experiences of Newark and of New Jersey under the State Anti-Discrimination Law and the City Fair Practices Ordinance. The subject of his testimony was a proposed federal bill (S-692) to "Prohibit Discrimination in Employment Because of Race, Color, Religion, National Origin or Ancestry."

Our Chairman, in his testimony, stated, "Newark, along with other cities, knows that the establishment of democratic employment patterns are helpful and can prove vital to the national security, in that they give to all citizens an equal opportunity for advancement." In conclusion, he said, "The peoples of the City of Newark and the State of New Jersey have learned to live with such a law and to truly like it."

Senator Ives, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee, remarked, at the end of the formal statement, "I want to compliment you upon your presentation. It has been very valuable and very helpful to us."

The Mayor's Commission on Group Relations reproduced the testimony in an illustrated pamphlet, "Newark Points the Way to National F. e. P." (Fair Employment Practices). Of the 3,500 copies published, 2,500 have been distributed through the mail and at conventions, conferences, and meetings of interested organizations.

ADVANCED WORKSHOP IN HUMAN RELATIONS

In the Spring term of 1954, a series of ten classes were sponsored at the West Side Adult School by the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations. This "Advanced Workshop in Human Relations" was the first course of its type offered at any adult school in the United States. Students were selected on the basis of their previous education in human relations and participation in human relations organizations. Registration was limited to twenty-five persons so that the classes could be conducted on a group discussion basis.

Guest consultants served as resource persons for each session. These consultants consisted of six university professors in human relations, three executives from nationally known private agencies in human relations, and three officials of governmental human relations agencies.

Included in the student body were local representatives of both governmental and private agencies in human relations. The content of the course was concerned with the latest thinking and professional techniques in the field, including such subjects as: Community Audits and Self-Surveys, Conflict-Episode Analysis, and the Theory and Practice of Group Dynamics.

UNITED NATIONS ANNIVERSARY

Mayor Leo P. Carlin designated the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations as the government's official agency to coordinate the City's observance of the United Nation's Ninth Anniversary. In cooperation with the Newark chapter of the American Association for the United Nations, a special program was presented at Arts High School on the evening of October 21, 1954.

The featured speaker was India's alternate delegate to the United Nations, Madame Lakshmi Nandan Menon. Organizations participating in the program included: Attucks Guard Post 152 of the American Legion, The Doctors Chorus of the Essex County Medical Society, The Junior Leaguers, and the Arts High School Orchestra. The affair was attended by approximately 275 people.

POLICE TRAINING IN HUMAN RELATIONS

At the invitation of the Chief of Police, the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations was requested to conduct a series of classes for Patrolmen taking refresher courses at the Newark Police Academy.

Each week a new group of eighteen to twenty Patrolmen attended a fifty-minute class in "Community and Group Relations". After a ten-minute lecture on the importance of human relations in police work, the remaining forty-minutes were devoted to a group discussion of problems in human relations encountered by policemen in their daily work.

Following every discussion, unsigned evaluation forms were

completed by the patrolmen in which they indicated their reactions to the class. Of the 165 patrolmen who attended the classes, the majority rated these sessions as "Very Fine," or "Good". A recommendation that "More Time" be devoted to this subject appeared most often on the patrolmen's evaluation forms.

FAIR ELECTION CAMPAIGN PLEDGE

The year 1954 was a critical one for the citizen in politics. Newark voted YES on a Referendum to change to the Mayor-Council Form of Government. During the subsequent campaign for Mayor and Council positions, the Commission on Group Relations, anticipating a hard-fought contest, distributed Fair Election Pledges to all candidates.

We were happy to report that every candidate signed and returned the pledges. There were reported a few incidents of appeals to racial, religious and nationality groups, but considering the heat of the campaign, they did not appear to reach the proportions of past election years. The Pledge read as follows:

"PLEDGE"

I believe in the principles set forth in the Constitution's Bill of Rights, the provisions of the New Jersey State Law Against Discrimination, and the Newark Fair Practices Ordinance.

Therefore, as a candidate for office in the coming election, I hereby pledge to conduct my campaign in an unbiased, honorable manner.

I further pledge that I shall not seek to discredit other candidates because of their race, religion or national origin; that I shall appeal to the people only as voters of Newark; and finally, I shall not falsely accuse another candidate of discriminatory acts or statements against any minority.

(signed) _____

COMMISSION SCHOLARSHIPS TO THE RUTGERS UNIVERSITY
WORKSHOP IN HUMAN RELATIONS FOR COMMUNITY LEADERS

For the past four years, the Commission has cooperated with Rutgers University, The Division Against Discrimination of the State Department of Education and the National Conference of Christians and Jews in awarding scholarships to qualified Newark residents who are selected to attend the summer session.

This year, eight employees of the City of Newark were awarded scholarships by the Commission.. The Board of Education and the Newark Housing Authority were given two each, while the Police, Fire and Health Departments each received one. For the first time, a member of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations, Mrs. Ann Nugent, was included in the team of community leaders to be so honored.

GETTING TO KNOW OUR PUERTO RICANS

The staff of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations considers itself professionally obligated to act not only when a complaint is made or when a crisis occurs, but also to anticipate the possible difficulties that lie in the immediate future of human relations for Newark and therefore be able to take immediate preventive action.

Consequently, during the past year, the staff has made a pioneering effort in obtaining the human relations facts concerning our growing Puerto Rican community. Particular attention has been devoted to the recognition of adjustment difficulties attendant to the settling of a new population. Great effort was expended in identifying the leaders of the Puerto Rican community, and in establishing communication with certain key individuals for purposes of effective liaison.

Extensive interviews were held with these leaders and also with officials from the Department of labor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Wherever an exchange of information with other city and state agencies was deemed desirable, such conferences were held.

The result of this effort has been the creation of a repository of information, concerning our Puerto Rican population, second to none in the city. Both preventive and remedial techniques in human relations, based on this information, are either already underway or are being prepared for immediate application.

SURVEY OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

During the months of September and October, 1954, the staff of the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations visited all public and private offices in the city where one or more persons are employed full or part-time in "intercultural education."

In each visit, an interview was conducted with responses being recorded on a standard form (developed by the staff of the Commission). Two major facts were produced through this study. First, little or nothing is being done in intercultural education for our aging population. Second, field trips, one of the better known techniques in intercultural education, are being used by very few agencies.

Some other information was also developed in this survey. A number of agencies expressed a desire for closer, continuous liaison. Several suggested that their work would be facilitated if the Mayor's Commission on Group Relations could obtain funds to establish a central clearing house service on new audio-visual aids and literature in the field of human relations. Several also suggested that the Commission issue a regular newsletter as a means of establishing closer liaison among the City's public and private agencies.

These findings and recommendations will be brought to the attention of the new Commission for action.

THE DAY TO DAY JOB

The foregoing special events and activities are the more dramatic high-spots of the past year's educational effort. But the routine functioning of the Commission can be understood only when the DAY TO DAY JOB IS SPUNLED OUT IN GREATER DETAIL, because the major portion of staff time is consumed in direct services to individuals and organizations.

These services fall into four categories:

- | | |
|-------|--|
| 104 | Investigations of complaints not covered by the Anti-Discrimination Laws of the State of New Jersey. Also referrals from the Division Against Discrimination of complaints they could not process. |
| 1,089 | Consultations and advisory sessions with organizations and individuals on matters pertaining to the elimination of prejudice and discrimination, as well as the improvement of group relations. |
| 73 | Conferences with civic and social agencies on matters which relate to the peace and welfare of the City of Newark: Juvenile delinquency, recreation, housing, health, unemployment, etc. |
| 184 | Programs planned, speeches delivered or discussions conducted by the Staff and Speakers Bureau of the Commission. |

Topics most frequently used were:

1. The Work of the Mayor's Commission
on Group Relations.
2. The Psychology of Prejudice.
3. Human Rights in the United States
Today - A Balance Sheet.
4. Where Do We Go From Here In The
Field Of Human Relations.
5. Newark Takes The Lead Toward A
National Fair Employment
Practices Act.

In addition to the above areas of specialization, the staff
of the Commission is prepared to give advice on setting up
courses in Leadership Development, Group Dynamics and the train-
ing of Discussion Leaders.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Public Addresses by Staff and Speakers Bureau

<u>Number of Groups</u>	<u>Nature of Group</u>	<u>Approximate Audience</u>
19	Religious Groups	2,120
44	General Conferences and Forums	1,825
4	Elementary and High School Groups	1,950
3	Teachers Meetings	350
1	Mayor's Commissions	72
4	Adult Education Courses	150
6	Parent Teacher Associations	520
27	Women's Organizations	1,700
10	Commission Meetings	290
1	College Students	540
2	Service Clubs	100
3	Public Celebrations	<u>4,275</u>
127	Total of All Groups	13,892

OUR FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

In the month of February, 1954, the Mayor's Commission published its first annual report, covering the year 1953. Of the 5,000 copies printed, approximately 4,400 have been distributed at meetings, conferences and conventions and through the mail.

All physicians, dentists, barbers and beauticians in the City of Newark received a copy with a request that it be placed on their literature stands. This was done in order to achieve the widest possible readership per copy.

The annual report was also mailed to all clergymen in the City, with a request that they examine the text for possible ideas which might be used in sermons. The response of the Clergy to the report was overwhelmingly enthusiastic.

In the mail distribution, return post cards were included with each copy. Of the 1,014 cards returned, 763 recipients rated the report as excellent, 208 responded with a mark of good, 36 said it was fair, while only 7 persons felt it was in bad taste.

Twenty volunteer workers from the City of Newark and its environs assisted the office staff in the addressing and mailing of the report.

